

D-726
The J. M. Clayton Company
Cambridge
Private

Early to mid 20th century

The J. M. Clayton Company occupies a pivotal site on the Cambridge waterfront near the junction of Cambridge Creek and the Choptank River, and the business occupies one of the oldest and most significant packinghouse structures remaining on the Eastern Shore. Built in several stages during the early to mid twentieth century, the oldest part is a common bond brick section that dates around 1900. The south façade is particularly noteworthy with its undisturbed common bond wall surface punctuated with original window and door openings, several of which retain double rowlock arches. The waterside of the packinghouse also retains exposed sections of common bond brick walls representing the oldest section of the building. Initially erected for the firm of Tubman, Mills & Company, the common bond brick packinghouse has been enlarged with later concrete block and brick additions in the accretive and strictly functional manner indicative of the utilitarian construction typical in the seafood industry.

John M. Clayton was a sailor and freighted pineapple, coal, lumber and salt from the West Indies and also took seed oysters to Long Island Sound. He moved from Bloxom, Virginia to Hoopesville, Maryland by 1890 where he built an oyster shucking business adjacent to a deep water steamboat landing. Soon the company began processing crabmeat and canning herring. During World War I they canned tomatoes.

J. M. Clayton was the first company in Dorchester County, perhaps on the Eastern Shore, to pick crabmeat commercially. The brand name "Epicure" came from a 40-foot log canoe owned by J. M. Clayton. The Hoopersville plant was sold to Ulman White & Co. in 1921 when the Clayton Company moved to Cambridge, purchasing the old Tubman, Mills & Company oyster packing plant at the end of Commerce Street. The company has expanded the old plant several times and is still operated by the Clayton family.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-726

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic The J. M. Clayton Company (preferred), J. M. Clayton & Co.
other Tubman, Mills & Company

2. Location

street and number 30 Commerce Street ☐ not for publication
city, town Cambridge vicinity
county Dorchester

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name The J. M. Clayton Company
street and number P. O. Box 321 telephone 410-228-1661
city, town Cambridge state Maryland zip code 21613

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dorchester County Clerk of Court liber PLC 136 folio 391
city, town Cambridge tax map 301 tax parcel 55 tax ID number 7-161174

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
☐ Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory

7. Description

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Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The J. M. Clayton Company is located at the end of Commerce Street on Cambridge Creek on a parcel of land historically known as "The Point" in Cambridge, Dorchester County, Maryland. The J. M. Clayton Company complex consists of two groups of buildings; the former Tubman, Mills & Company buildings and the former Ivy L. Leonard Packing Company building, which were consolidated into one company-owned facility. (See D-731 for information on the I. L. Leonard Packing Company building)

The company office, picking, packing and shipping rooms are located in the former Tubman, Mills & Co. building, a composite common bond brick and concrete block structure built in several stages beginning around 1900 and stretching through the early to mid twentieth century. The oldest section of the main building is a c. 1900 two-story, three-bay, seven-course common bond brick block flanked on the north and south sides by later mid to late twentieth-century additions. The exposed three openings in the common bond brick wall include a door in the easternmost opening and two six-over-six sash windows. Each of the openings are spanned by double rowlock segmental arches. The line of the roof slopes from east to west and includes a single-flue brick stack between the second and third bays. The structure is covered with a metal roof. East of the three-bay section is a narrower three-bay loading bay defined by a double door entrance and flanking six-over-six sash windows piercing a five-course common bond wall. The typical row of headers is substituted in this case by a Flemish bond row. The first floor openings are spanned by steel lintels. Extending from the wall between floors is a metal covered awning supported by metal brackets. The second story is lighted by six-over-six sash windows. Attached to the northwest side of the original section is a single story, mid twentieth-century brick office covered by a flat roof. The walls are pierced by metal windows fitted atop brick sills. The northeast side of the facility has exposed sections of turn of the twentieth century common bond brickwork with a few remaining double rowlock segmental arches spanning door or window openings. Extending from the northwest corner of the brick facility is a single-story concrete block section covered by a low pitched shed roof.

The interior is divided in a complex array of spaces devoted to crab processing. Located in the center of the composite structure is a large picking room with a bank of metal sash windows along the north wall. The room is finished with a concrete floor and an exposed beam ceiling painted white. Northeast of the main picking room is a processing space housed in a part brick, part concrete block walled space that has been consolidated into a single room. A vertical ladder in this room allows access to an upper storage room with exposed common bond brick walls and an exposed joist ceiling. The main picking room is flanked on southeast side by a cold temperature holding room for crabmeat. The southwest side of the building houses rooms for shipping. A staircase in this section provides access to second floor storage and equipment spaces defined by exposed brick walls and exposed joists ceilings.

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Specific dates

Architect/Builder

Construction dates

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

The J. M. Clayton Company occupies a pivotal site on the Cambridge waterfront near the junction of Cambridge Creek and the Choptank River, and the business occupies one of the oldest and the most significant brick packinghouse structures remaining on the Eastern Shore. Built in several stages during the early to mid twentieth century, the oldest part is a common bond brick section that dates around 1900. The south façade is particularly noteworthy with its undisturbed common bond wall surfaces with original window openings, several of which retain double rowlock segmental arches. The waterside also retains exposed sections of common bond brick walls representing the oldest part of the packinghouse. Initially built for the firm of Tubman, Mills & Company, the common bond brick packinghouse has been enlarged with later concrete block and brick additions in the accretive and strictly functional manner common to utilitarian construction typical in the seafood industry.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

John M. Clayton was a sailor and freighted pineapple, coal, lumber and salt from the West Indies and also took seed oysters to Long Island Sound. He moved from Bloxom, Virginia to Hoopersville, Maryland, by 1890 where he built an oyster shucking business adjacent to a deep water steamboat landing.¹ Soon the company began processing crabmeat and canning herring. During World War I they canned tomatoes.

J. M. Clayton was the first company in Dorchester County, perhaps on the Eastern Shore, to pick crab commercially. The brand name "Epicure" came from a 40-foot log canoe owned by J. M. Clayton. The Hoopersville plant was sold to Ulman White & Company in 1921 when the Clayton Company moved to Cambridge, Maryland, purchasing the old Tubman, Mills & Company oyster packing plant on Cambridge Creek from W. Grason Winterbottom.² The company packed oysters, crabmeat and tomatoes, and sold oyster shell under the brand names, "Clayton's," "Veach's," and "Epicure." The building was enlarged to accommodate 134 crab pickers. The new location in Cambridge provided easy access to Railway Express, reliable telephone and telegraph, and electricity. This gave the company

¹ Anne Stinson, *Hoopers Island—Today & Many Yesterdays*, 1975.

² "J. M. Clayton's Seafood Celebrates 100 Years," Cambridge, Maryland, *Chamber of Commerce Newsletter*, 1990, p. 3.

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access to other markets than Baltimore, and they began selling crabmeat as far away as New York City. A daily train took seafood to Wilmington, Delaware, with connections to the rest of the country. There was an ice company across from the railroad station in Cambridge, and another ice plant on Washington Street. Big blocks of ice were put in bunkers at either end of the freight cars that carried loads of shucked oysters and crabmeat.

In 1924, the company expanded by purchasing the adjacent oyster packinghouse from Hugh M. Fountain to accommodate the expanding seafood processing operations. In 1944, the company acquired another adjacent parcel, the old Mace, Woolford & Company packinghouse, purchased from the Phillips Packing Company. J. M. Clayton purchased crabmeat and shucked oysters from the Benjamin F. Veach Company on Elliott's' Island and distributed them under the Clayton company's brand names. Marion Elliott married Nettie Veach, and he and his brothers eventually renamed the Veach company Elliott Bros. Seafood. The association with J. M. Clayton was maintained, and the Elliotts sold their products to Clayton until they closed in 1962.

In September, 1944, the Seafood Workers Local #453 claimed to represent the employees of J. M. Clayton & Co., and asked for union recognition and a contract.³ They refused to recognize or bargain with the union until it had been certified by the National Labor Relations Board. The union filed a petition with the NLRB for an election and was certified as a bargaining agent for the employees in November, 1944. As of November 6, 1945, none of the Cambridge companies had agreed to a contract with their workers and the Union complained to the NLRB that the companies were not bargaining in good faith. Employees of J. M. Clayton went on strike with four other firms, refusing to work without a contract. The owners would not negotiate with the union while their employees were on strike and the employees returned to work.⁴

In March, 1950, Seafood Workers Local #149 won an election for certification among the oyster shuckers of the J. M. Clayton Company. The vote was 101 for the Amalgamated and 33 for no union. The company agreed to follow the terms of the contract but would not withhold dues from weekly pay, and no formal union was ever established.⁵

Clayton's son-in-law, Carl Veach, became president and ran the company with J. Clayton Brooks, grandson of J. M. Clayton. The company purchased Orem and Willy Johnson's packinghouse on Goose

³ U. S. Department of Labor, United States Conciliation Service, Baltimore, Maryland, File No. 442-2446, September 21, 1944, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

⁴ U. S. Department of Labor, United States Conciliation Service, Baltimore, Maryland, File No. 452-3095, November 6, 1945, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

⁵ "Highlights During January," *The Butcher Workman*, March 1950, p. 15.

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Creek in Toddville about 1938 where they ran a subsidiary company picking crabmeat and shucking oysters until 1950. The company continued to pack seafood during World War II, as watermen and those working in the food industry were exempt from the draft.

Since the mid-1940s, the Cambridge plant has picked crabmeat year-around, purchasing crabs in Maryland, Virginia, and North and South Carolina. They added an oyster-shell-grinding operation in 1945 to make oyster grit for poultry and agricultural lime. This facility closed in the late 1960s when the State of Maryland required companies to replant fifty percent of their oyster shells. The company also produced crab meal feed for poultry but this was also closed in the late 1960s when the Environmental Protection Agency imposed stringent restrictions on air discharges. The company discontinued processing oysters in 1967 because of a growing shortage of oysters and a shortage of shuckers.⁶

J. Clayton Brooks became president of the company in 1965 when the company employed 160 people (60 men and 100 women) to process shucked oysters, crabmeat, crabs, crushed oyster shell and crab meal.⁷ In 1973, he and Calvert Tolley and Ted Reinke began work on the first commercial crab picking machine called the "Quik Pik." It was patented in the early 1980s and increased company crabmeat production by 150 percent. It is now used by companies in Maryland, Georgia, South Carolina, Florida, and Virginia.⁸ In 1977, the company employed 30 men and 70 women who processed shucked oysters, crabs, crabmeat, and prepared seafoods.⁹

The company opened a seafood restaurant, Clayton's On The Creek, in the old shell-crushing mill in 1985. The current tenant, Snappers, has been in operation since 1994. J. Clayton Brooks retired in 1989 when his three sons took over the management of the company, with Jack Brooks as president, William Brooks as accountant, and Joseph Brooks as plant supervisor. In 2001, approximately 100 people were employed, of whom 45 were Mexican migrant workers in the Federal H-2B non-agricultural guest-worker program.¹⁰

J. M. Clayton crabmeat is sold to wholesalers, restaurants, and seafood markets in New England, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia, and to companies that produce commercial crabcakes. At one time, they sold oysters to the Campbells Soup factory in Camden, New Jersey to be canned as oyster stew.

⁶ Interview with William Brooks, May 31, 2001.

⁷ *Directory of Maryland Manufacturers 1965-1966*, Maryland Department of Economic Development, p. 233.

⁸ Amy Malkus, "Century of Seafood: J. M. Clayton Company Celebrates 100th Anniversary," *Cambridge Banner*, c. 1990.

⁹ *Directory of Maryland Manufacturers*, Maryland Department of Economic and Community Development, Eight Edition, September 1977, p. 165.

¹⁰ Conversation with William Brooks, May 31, 2001.

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The J. M. Clayton Company
Commerce Street
Cambridge, Maryland 21613
Chain of title

Map 301, Parcel 55

PLC 136/391

Alma V. Veach, Paul E. Veach
T. Clayton Brooks, Ellison R. Clayton

to

8/19/1963

The J. M. Clayton Company

Surviving co-partners....do hereby bargain and sell...unto the said J.M. Clayton Company.....all of the machinery, tools, equipment, and any all personal property in and upon said premises, and heretofore used in connection with the operation of a seafood business....

The Property consists of four parcels of land:

Parcel 1 of 4

JFD 29/668

T. Sangston Insley, Attorney in mortgage foreclosure
Ida M. Phillips & John J. Phillips

to

3/25/1933

Carl L. Veach & Alma V. Veach, joint partners trading as the
J. M. Clayton Company

172' x 75.6' x 135 ½' x 175' x 62'

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JFD 22/424

Ida M. Phillips & John J. Phillips

to

8/20/1928

John M. Clayton-defaulted on mortgage to Ida Phillips

M. Colona Slacum & Elizabeth C. Slacum

to

John M. Clayton-defaulted on mortgage to Ida M. Phillips

JFD 15/344

John M. Clayton & Mary L. Clayton

to

10/11/1924

M. Colona Slacum

consisting of wharf property...on the northwest side of
Cambridge Harbor, and at or near the mouth thereof...
175' x 75.6' x 135 ½' x 175' x 62'

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JFD 14/541

Hugh M. Fountain

to

3/31/1924

John M. Clayton

....parcel of land...on the northwest side of Cambridge Harbor,
and at or near the mouth thereof
172' x 75.6' x 135 ½' x 175' x 62'

the said Hugh M. Foutain...do hereby grant unto...John M. Clayton
all of the carriers, bins, skimmers, tanks, wheelbarrows, hand trucks,
hoists, tubs, equipment and appliances of every kind now in the
oyster house on the land above described or about the premises,
including all of the office furniture, stoves, desks, chairs, and
furnishings of every kind now upon the premises aforesaid and used
during the past oyster season and by the said Hugh M. Fountain in
the oyster business conducted by him....

JFD 11/374

B. Frank Veach & Emma V. Veach

to

3/31/1924

Hugh M. Fountain & George W. Adams

....all that parcel of land consisting of valuable wharf property
on the northwest side of Cambridge Harbor and at the mouth thereof
175' x 75.6' x 135 ½' x 175' x 62'

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WHM 7/125

H. Harvey Conway
William P. Andrews & Arie W. Andrews

to

9/27/1919

B. Frank Veach
...being the same land....that is described and intended to be
conveyed....

WHM 6/393

H. Harvey Conway & Sarah C. Conway

to

6/12/1919

William P. Andrews

WHM 5/362

Andrew J. McIntosh & Florence L. J. McIntosh

to

11/21/1918

H. Harvey Conway

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WLR 5/624

Samuel H. Mills and wife and Charles O. Tubman

to

3/25/1913

Andrew J. McIntosh
...being part of the property known as "The Point"

WLR 3/656

Joseph W. Crowell

to

8/3/1911

John R. Tubman & Samuel H. Mills
....being part of the property known as "The Point"

FJH 13/516

David M. Carslake

to

10/13/1879

Joseph W. Crowell

Parcel 2 of 4:

RSM 49/309

Phillips Packing Company, Inc.

to

4/27/1944

Carl L. Veach & Alma V. Veach
all that parcel of land situate on the northward side of Cambridge

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Creek ...described as Lot No. 2

JFD 32/253

W. Grason Winterbottom & wife, Harry C. Orem & wife

to

4/17/1935

Phillips Packing Company, Inc.

...all that lot...situated...on the southeast side of High Street...
lying back from the street and in the rear of what was formerly
the resident property of Brice W. Goldsborough

JFD 13/313

J. Winfield Henry, Anna J. Lanier, widow, et al.

to

6/27/1923

W. Grason Winterbottom

does not reference an earlier deed...the property was demised to
W. Grason Winterbottom...by lease dated 7 May 1921....for a term
of two years...with the privilege of said lessee buying at the
expiration of said term the said property...the lessor has exercised
the option of purchase...lying in the rear of said residence property
now occupied by the said Anna C. Lanier lying between the said
residence property and the waters of Cambridge Creek....
Two lots...shall not be used for the business of a marine railway,
nor shall, at any time, any spirituous or fermented liquors or cider be
sold thereon...Lot 1...southwest corner thereof where it touches the
waters of Cambridge Creek and the east wall of the brick oyster
house of Ivy L. Leonard...Lot 2...all that small triangular parcel of
land....

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WHM 5/506

George W. Woolford & Sally M. Woolford

to

7/11/1919

W. Grason Winterbottom

...an undivided three-fifths interest, title and estate in and to the oyster packing business, which, on and prior to the 29th day of January, A. D. 1916, was conducted under the firm name of Mace, Woolford & Company, together with an undivided three-fifths interest, title and estate in and to all equipment, fixtures, office furniture, utensils, and implements....used in conjunction with the said oyster packing business....also an undivided three-fifths interest title and estate in and to the right to use the said firm name of Mace, Woolford, & Company, and in and to the good will of the said oyster packing business heretofore conducted by the said George W. Woolford and others

WHM 6/503

George W. Woolford & Sally M. Woolford

to

7/11/1919

W. Grason Winterbottom

...an undivided three-fifths interest in all those three parcels of land situated..between High Street and Cambridge Harbor.

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WLR 43/435

George W. Woolford & Sallie M. Woolford

to

5/13/1911

Harry C. Orem
...an undivided two-fifths interest in and to all those three parcels
between High Street and the Cambridge Harbor

CL 33/3

Joseph W. Crowell & Roberta Crowell

to

4/8/1907

George W. Woolford
...parcel of land situate...on the point known as "Crowell's
Shipyard" being the same land which was leased unto the
said George W. Woolford by the said Joseph W. Crowell
and Roberta Crowell...by two leases dated respectively,
6/30/1898 and 5/3/1899
....being the rear part of the home property of Lydia A.
Hughlett and of a depth of fifty feet across the rear of said
property

JFH 13/516

David M. Carlslake

to

10/13/1879

Joseph W. Crowell

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Parcel 3 of 4:

JFD 25/192

Administrators of John M. Clayton, deceased, John M. Clayton, Jr.
Ellison R. Clayton, Mary L. Clayton, widow

to

12/28/1929

Alma V. Veach

...the said John M. Clayton was a partner of the said Carl L. Veach in the sea-food business conducted by them at Cambridge, Maryland under the firm name of J. M. Clayton & Co., each partner owning an undivided half-interest...it was mutually agreed by and among all of the children and heirs-at-law....and the said Carl L. Veach, surviving partner...that the partnership and estate....should be sold toAlma V. Veach....wife of said Carl L. Veach and daughter of the Decedent....all of the partnership property and business, wharf, land, premises and improvements thereon...bordering on Cambridge Harbor, including the 18 foot right of way particularly laid down and described in a deed to George W. Woolford from Joseph W. Crowell, 4/8/1907, CL 33/3, ...which said right of way extends from said partnership property out to Commerce Street; and including also the right of way of 18 feet described and created in and by the indenture between said W. Grason Winterbottom and others, and the said John M. Clayton and Carl L. Veach, trading as J. M. Clayton & Company, 7/7/1921, WHM 10/424

WHM 10/312

W. Grason Winterbottom & Nannie D. Winterbottom

to

5/19/1921

John M. Clayton & Carl L. Veach, Co-parnters trading as
J. M. Clayton & Company

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WHM 4/422

Samuel H. Mills & Eugene Mills, et al, Co-partners trading as
Tubman Mills & Company

to

1/16/1918

W. Grason Winterbottom

...the grantors do....sell unto the said W. Grason Winterbottom...
all the buildings and improvements of every kind upon the land
and property...including all fixtures and appurtenances, the good
will, firm name, books, records, iron safe and combination,
typewriter, wagon, tubs, skimmers, office fixtures, wheel barrows,

gasoline engine, hoisting outfit, and all other personal property
of every kind...belonging to the said Tubman, Mills & Company,
and used by them in connection with the oyster packing business
which on September 15, 1917 was being conducted under the name
name of Tubman, Mills, & Company, saving and excepting....a lot
of oyster shells which had been sold to the County Commissioners
of Dorchester County, some dredges and winders which did not
belong to the grantors herein named, and some old boat sails, a
barometer, and a cot....

WLR 2/244

Joseph W. Crowell

to

6/8/1910

John R. Tubman and Samuel H. Mills
...being part of the property formerly known as "The Point"
property and more recently known as "Crowell's Shipyard"
property

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FJH 13/516

David M. Clarslake

to

10/13/1879

Joseph W. Crowell

Parcel 4 of 4:

JFD 32/250

W. Grason Winterbottom & Nannie D. Winterbottom

to

4/17/1935

Phillips Packing Company, Inc.

The Eastern Shore, Maryland: A Business Review and Sketch Book, R. H. Woodward Co., Baltimore, 1901

p. lxvi.

Tubman, Mills & Company (photograph on same page)

Cambridge, Maryland, is located on the waters of the Great Choptank River, but a few miles from the grand Chesapeake, which is an arm of the Ocean, one hundred and eighty miles long by fifteen miles wide, and is the second oyster market in the State of Maryland. Tubman, Mills & Co., composed of John R. Tubman and Samuel H. Mills, some years ago foresaw the advantages of this location, and were among the first to take active steps to expand the oyster packing business at this point. They were the first to erect a nice and commodious oyster packing house with all modern improvements, and every facility for handling an extensive oyster business. Their location, on Crowell's Point, at the foot to Commerce street, is acknowledged to be the best for the packing business in this city, being in the very heart of the oyster dredging vessels, as the catch is brought in from the oyster rocks, enabling

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them to procure nice fresh stock at all times. They employ 150 hands in their shucking house and give strict attention to this department of their business, being careful to see that the stock is properly handled by those doing the shucking, and that oysters are shucked whole without being cut or torn. All shipments are made in nicely painted and thoroughly cleaned packages, so as to make the oysters attractive and appetizing to those who handle and consume the delicious bivalves. They own and control the best fleet of oyster dredging boats on this river, having been engaged in this branch of the business for over 25 years, their long experience in handling a large fleet of dredgers making them familiar with all the oyster rocks on the Chesapeake and its many tributaries. They know where the best oysters grow, and they have the reputation of sending out the best stock to be had in the market. As a result their business has branched out in all directions, north, east, and west, and many of those who commenced to handle this firm's oysters when they first started in the packing business are still their most active buyers, and have from year to year increased their orders with them, plainly showing that they have been satisfied with their stock, measure, prices, etc. and as each year rolls round they find that they have added to their list of dealers many new customers. All orders receive prompt attention without delay or inconvenience to those who favor them with their trade. They are in a position to have stock whenever there is any to be had in the market, as their fleet of oyster boats is always on the go and will have oysters at all times. Their shipping facilities are good. They have Adams' Express by rail 7 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. daily, except Sunday, by steamer via Baltimore 6 p.m. daily, except Saturday. B. & O. Express by steamer via Baltimore daily, except Saturday. Freight by rail 7 a.m. daily, except Sunday, by steamer via Baltimore 6 p.m. daily, except Saturday. Empire Line (when on) 7 a.m. daily, except Sunday. This firm has taken an active interest in the business life in Cambridge. They are stockholders in the Dorchester National Bank, The Eastern Shore Trust Company, The Building and Loan Association, The Cambridge Gas Company and the Cambridge Manufacturing Company, and when the business interests were in need of another banking institution they took an active and leading interest in the establishment of the Farmers and Merchants National Bank which has recently organized with some of the leading and most prominent business men of the County and City as stockholders, and in which bank they were named as Directors.

p. lviii.

Mace, Woolford & Company

The purpose of this Review, in part, is to portray as faithfully and forcibly as possible the people of this and other states somewhat of the present status and condition of trade and manufacturers of this section. Also to show the class and character of individuals, firm and corporations that control business affairs, and are in readiness to serve the interest and do the bidding of customers both far and near. To do this most effectively, it will be necessary to go more or less into a detailed description of representative firms. The oyster packing interest is of paramount importance, and the leading exponent here is Mace, Woolford & Co. This is one of the oldest firms, its origin dating back twenty

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-726

Name The J. M. Clayton Company

Continuation Sheet

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years. From an unpretentious beginning the business has grown into one of large proportions, being the largest shippers of oysters in the state of Maryland outside the city of Baltimore. The packing house proper is a two-story brick building, substantially built, and erected directly on the water's edge, at the foot of Commerce street. It is situated on the Inner Harbor, and only a stone's throw from the famous Choptank river, where grow to perfection the most delicious oysters in the world. The location is an ideal one, and from a business point of view is unsurpassed. This house has four branch places, the one of the harbor, however, is the main headquarters where the packing and shipping is done. From 800 to 1,000 gallons are packed and shipped daily. Messrs. Mace, Woolford & Co. are not only packers of salt water oysters but planters as well, their planting ground being on Goose Creek and Tate's Bank from where comes their famous "Goose Creek" brand. It is scarcely necessary to say that the river and all creeks in this section are salt. The oyster season is from September 1st, to May 1st, a period fixed by the Maryland and Virginia statutes. During the eight months this house presents a busy scene of activity. The handling of oysters is divided into three departments—dredging, shucking, and packing. They are dredged and scraped from the bottom of the stream which is near by, or at the farthest, only a few miles away. The boats used are called dredge or scrape boats. The firm finds it necessary during the season to buy oysters of other boats in order to supply the demand. The oysters are inspected and unloaded at the packing house and shucked. The shucking requires the greatest amount of work. As fast as shucked and measured they are packed in pails, kegs and barrels, holding from 3 to 30 gallons. In packing a deal of ice is used, from one-third to one-half the contents of each pail or barrel being ice. In this way they are kept fresh and can be shipped a long distance, this firm shipping as far west as Salt Lake City. The shipments are throughout the North and West and wherever the famous "Goose Creek" brand is introduced and known its reputation is made and demand is established, for it is regarded by connoisseurs as the most delicious of oysters. Mr. George W. Woolford, the surviving partner, is to the manor born. He has grown up in the oyster packing business, having been identified with it since he was seventeen years old, and is thoroughly conversant with it. That he has successfully managed and that his customers have been pleased are matters of fact attested by a large and growing trade. He is a prominent figure in the business activities of Cambridge. For six years he was president of the school board and is now (1901) president of the Board of County Commissioners. He is president of the Eastern Shore Trust Co., vice-president of the Cambridge Manufacturing Co., director of the Dorchester National Bank, and officially connected with both the Water and Gas companies. Mr. Woolford is an able and energetic business man, an enterprising citizen, and had been a most important factor in promoting the growth and advancement of Cambridge.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. D-726

Dorchester County Land Records, various volumes, Dorchester County Courthouse.

Sanborn Insurance Maps, various issues, microfilm at the Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History & Culture.

The Eastern Shore, Maryland: A Business Review and Sketch Book. R. H. Woodward Co., Baltimore, 1901.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 86,700 square feet

Acreage of historical setting 1/2 acre

Quadrangle name Cambridge, Maryland

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The historic metes and bounds of this property are coincidental with the current boundary of the lot.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian and Virginia Jenkins, Business Historian, CBMM		
organization	Private Consultants	date	6/15/2001
street & number	P. O. Box 5	telephone	410-651-1094
city or town	Westover	state	Maryland 21871

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

213 214 215 216 217
COMMERCE



CH. W. WOOLFORD
WOOD & COAL
YARD

J. C. LEANDROS
OYSTER HOUSES

Shuck Ho.

Shuck Ho.

MAY 1891

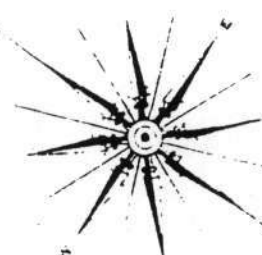
CAMBRIDGE

MD.

Shucking Ho.

Store Ho.

MACE, WOOLFORD & CO.
OYSTER PACKING



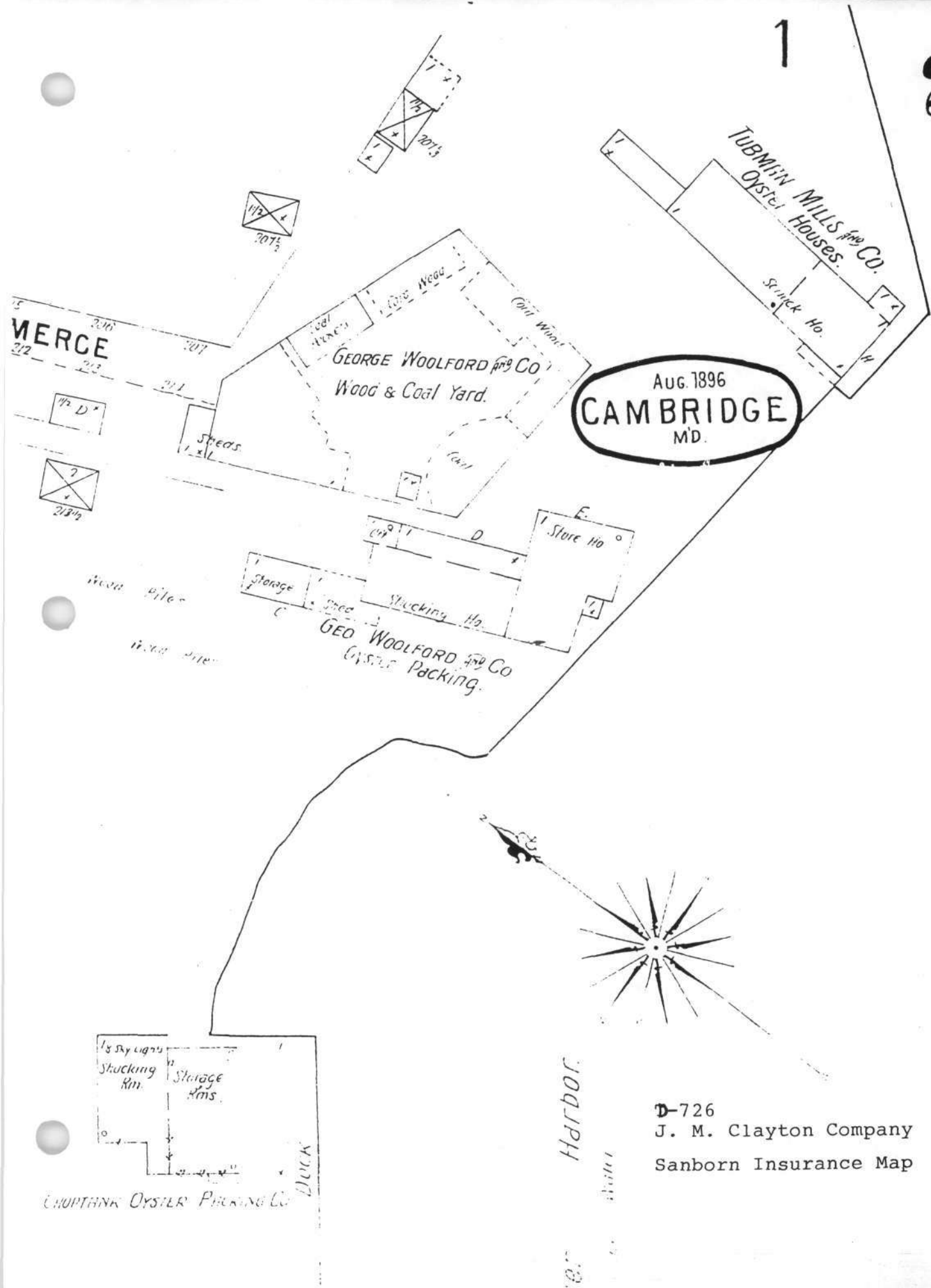
HARBOR.

D-726

J. M. Clayton Company

2

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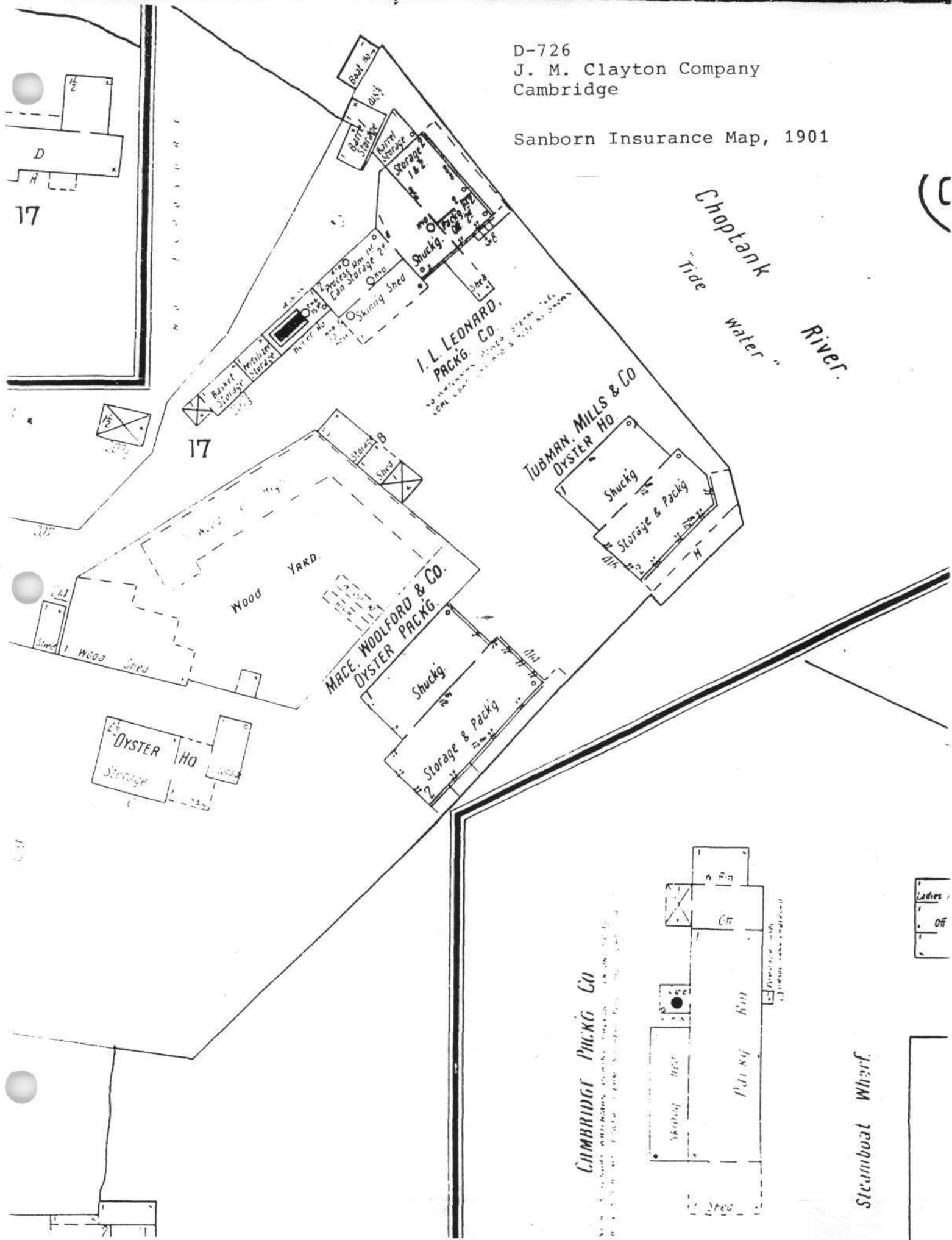
AUG. 1896
CAMBRIDGE
M.D.

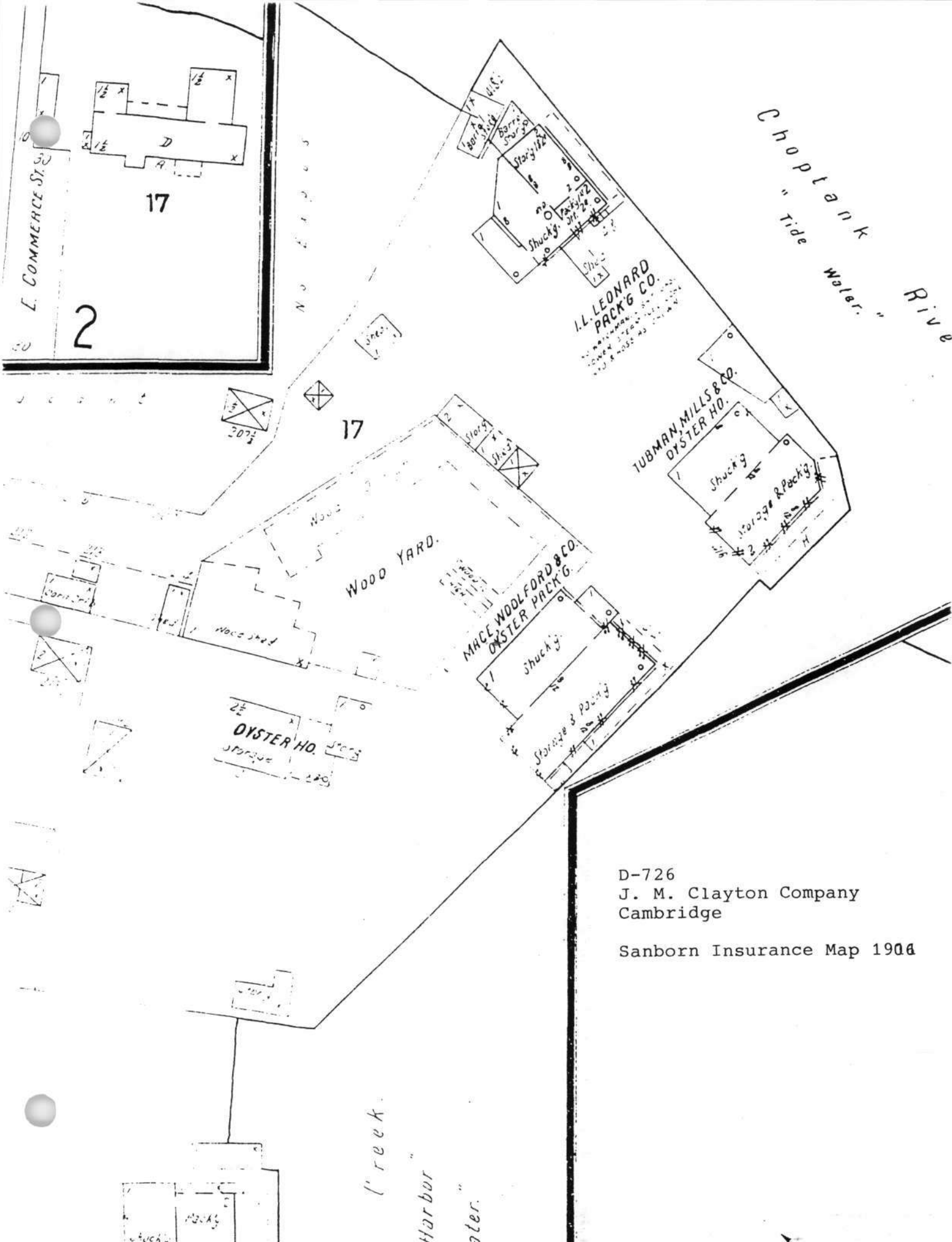
Harbor

D-726
J. M. Clayton Company
Sanborn Insurance Map

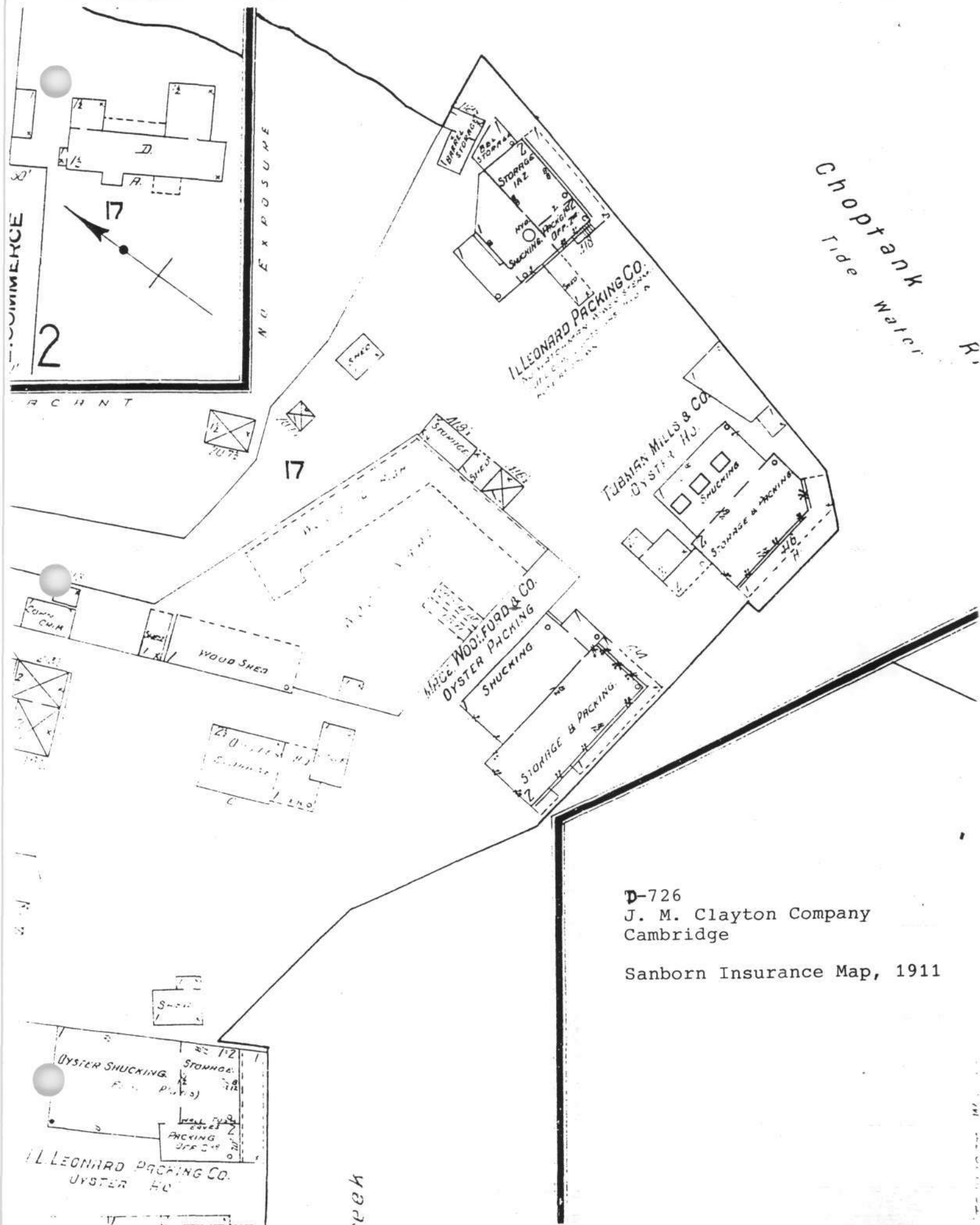
D-726
J. M. Clayton Company
Cambridge

Sanborn Insurance Map, 1901



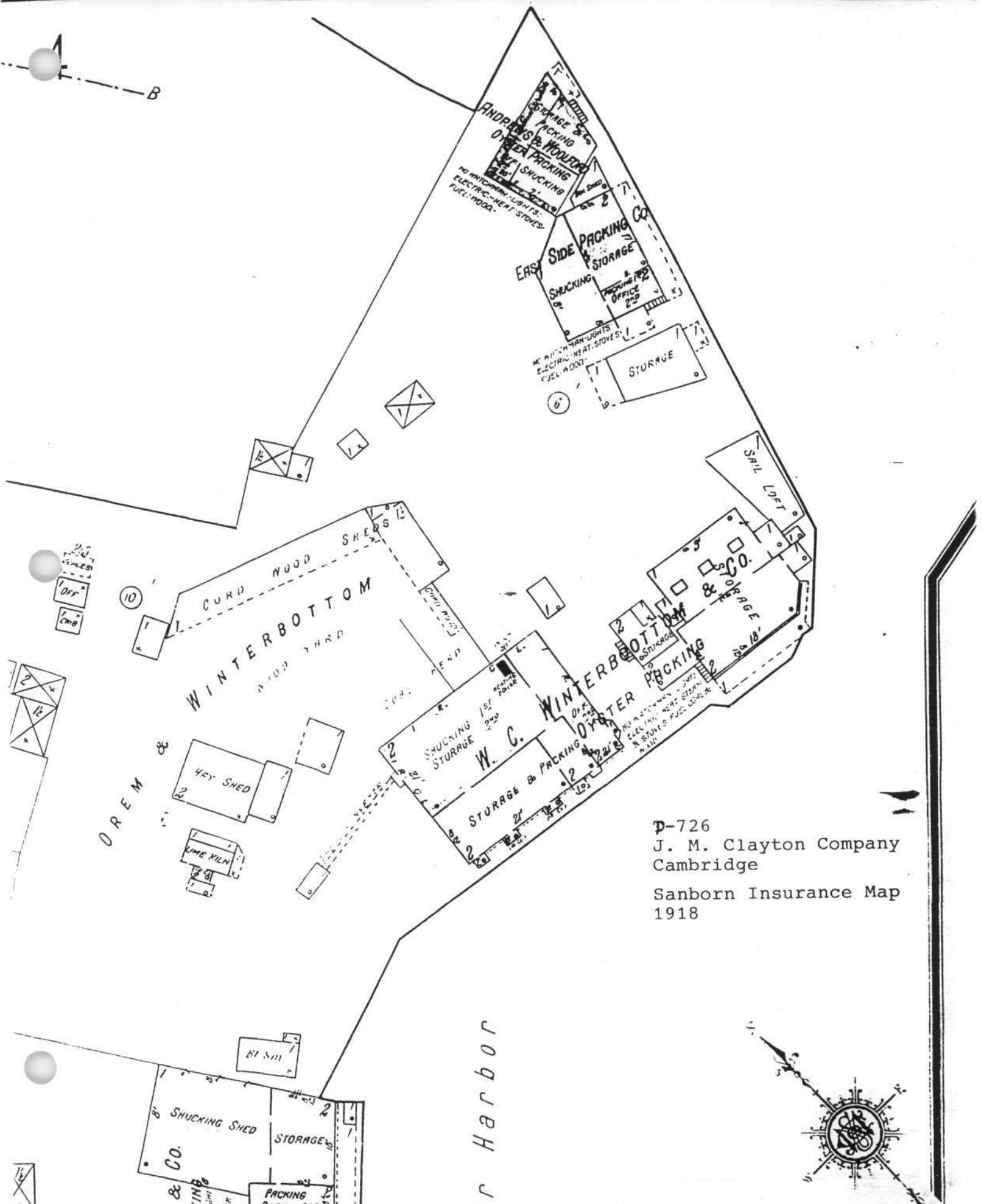


D-726
J. M. Clayton Company
Cambridge
Sanborn Insurance Map 1904



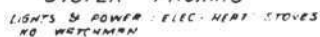
D-726
J. M. Clayton Company
Cambridge

Sanborn Insurance Map, 1911



D-726
J. M. Clayton Company
Cambridge
Sanborn Insurance Map
1918

Sanbourn Insurance Map, 1930



CLAYTON &
MYSTER PACKING
WATCHMAN LIGHTS & POWER
101
OF SKYLIGHT
BUCKING

Cambridge

E. COMMERCE

SHUCKING & OYSTER
PACKING.

05 JUN 71 / L'ÉONAR 50

17

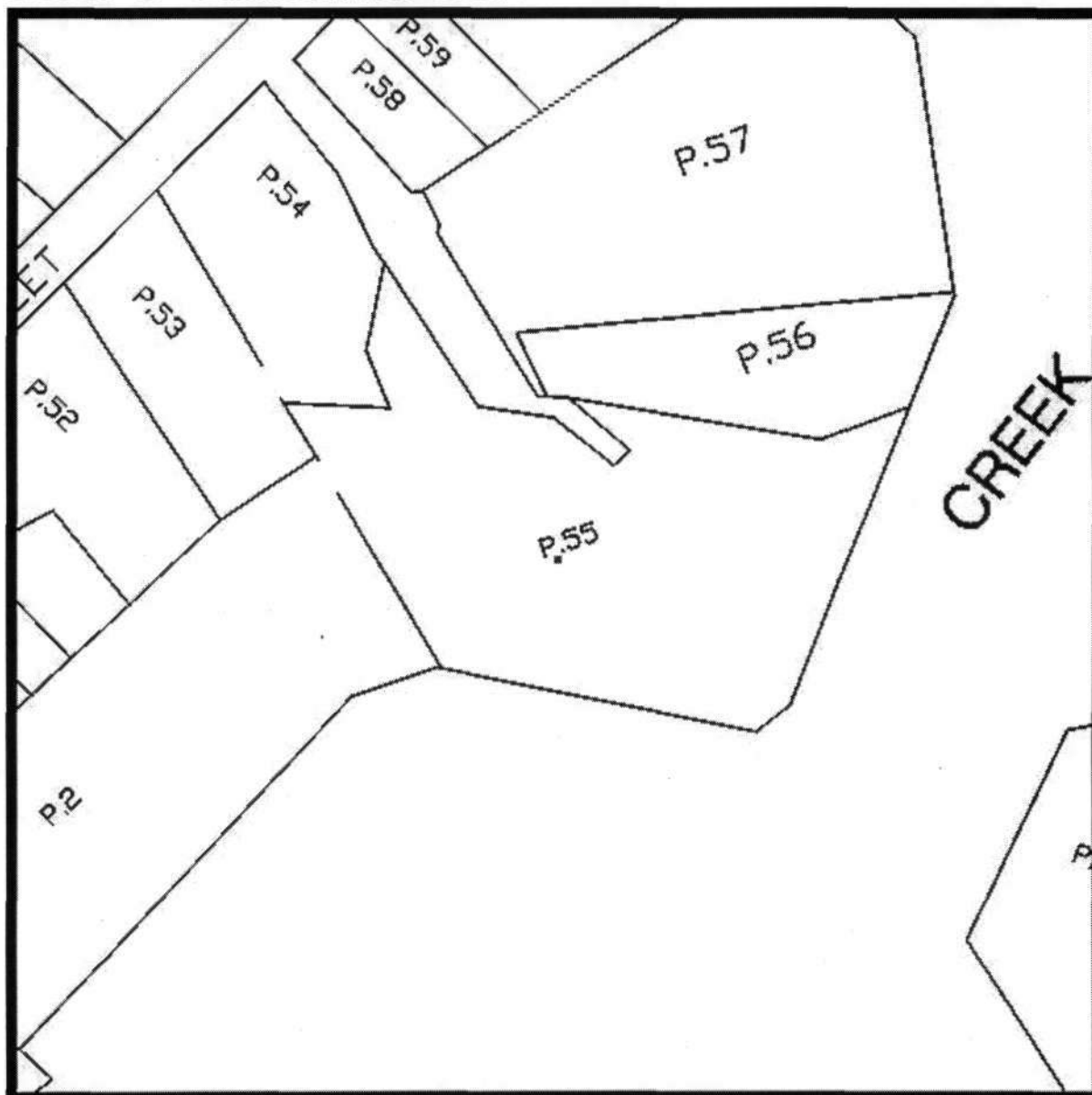
D-726



Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation
DORCHESTER COUNTY
Real Property Data Search

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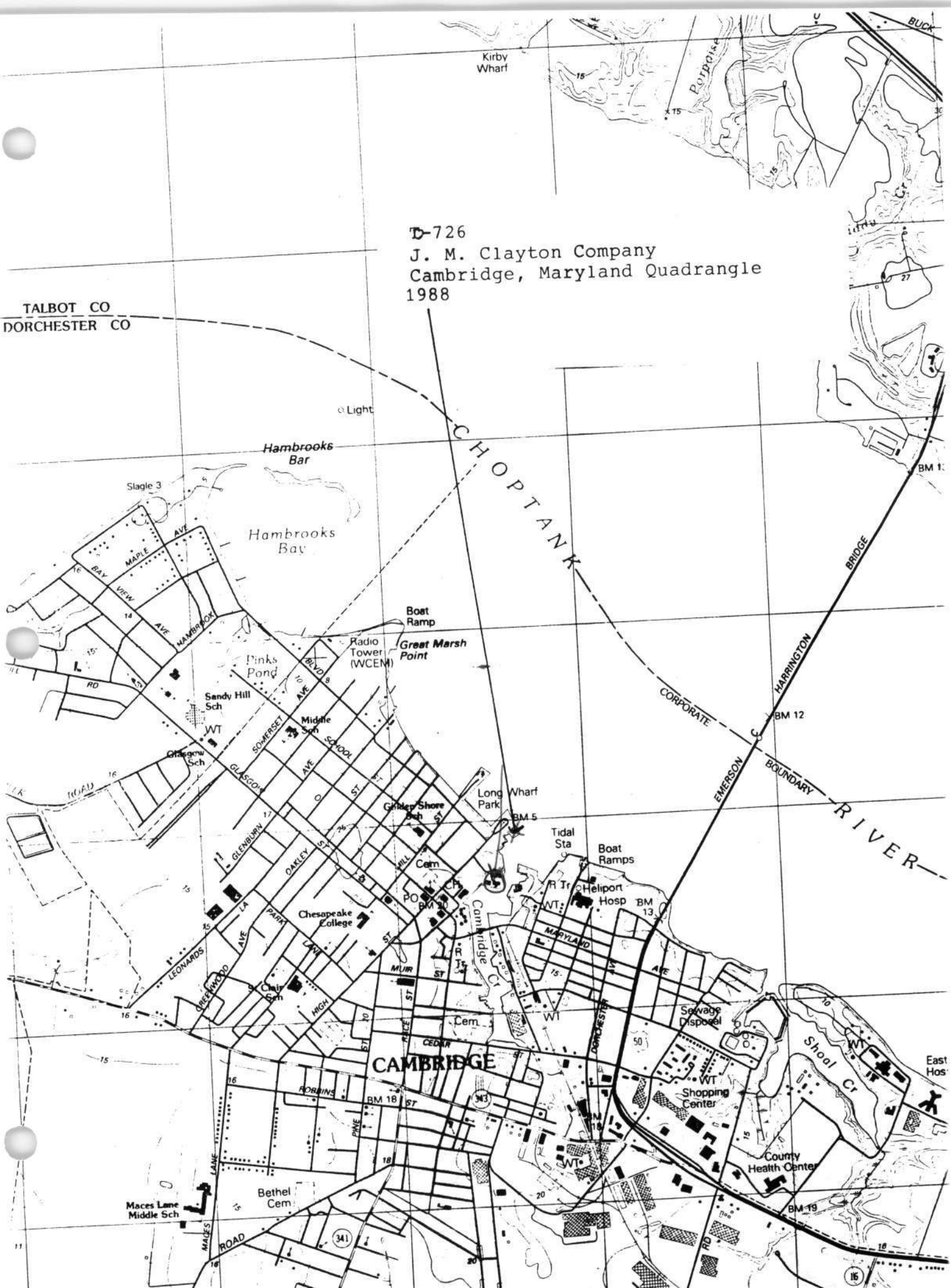
District - 07 Account Number - 161174



Property maps provided courtesy of the Maryland Department of Planning ©2001.
For more information on electronic mapping applications, visit the Maryland Department of Planning
web site at www.mdp.state.md.us/webcom/index.html

D-726
J. M. Clayton Company
Cambridge, Maryland Quadrangle
1988

TALBOT CO
DORCHESTER CO





D-726

The J. M. Clayton Company
Cambridge, Dorchester Co., ME.

South Elevation

6/2001, Paul Touart, Photographic
Mez./Mrs. Historical Trust

1 of 6



D-726

TITE S. M. CLAYTON COMPANY
CAMBRIDGE, DORCHESTER Co., MD.
SOUTHWEST ELEVATION

8/2001, PAUL TOWNAT, PHOTOGRAPHER
NEZ./MD. HISTORICAL TRUST

2 0 6 6



D-726

THE J. M. CLAYTON COMPANY
CAMBRIDGE, DORCHESTER CO., MD.
SOUTHEAST ELEVATION

6/2001, PAUL TOWERS, PHOTO.

NEE / MD. HISTORICAL TRUST

3 of 6



D-726

TITE L. M. CLAYTON COMPANY
CAMBRIDGE, DORCHESTER Co., MS.

NORTHEAST ELEVATION

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NEG AND. HISTORICAL TRUST

4 of 6



D-726

THE J. M. CLAYTON COMPANY
CAMBRIDGE, DORCHESTER CO., MD.

PICKING ROOM

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5 OF 6



D-726

TITE J. M. CRAYTON COMPANY
CAMBRIDGE, DORCHESTER CO., MD.
CRAB PROCESSING EQUIPMENT

6/2001, PAUL TOWART, PHOTOGRAPHER
MEZ./MD. HISTORICAL TRUST

6 OF 6



D-726 THE J. M. CLAYTON COMPANY
(TUBMAN, MILLS & CO. OYSTER PACKINGHOUSE)

CAMBRIDGE, DORCHESTER COUNTY, MD.

DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY, 1901, AS PRINTED IN
"THE EASTERN SHORE, MARYLAND: A BUSINESS REVIEW & SKETCH
BOOK"

LANDARK COLLECTION